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ABSTRACT

Approximately 50 studies employing programs to teach critical television viewing skills are annotated in this selective bibliography. Taken together, the annotations provide background information about critical television viewing and outline teacher-tested programs for instructing children to watch television critically. (RH)

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THE EFFECTS OF CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING
IN EDUCATING PRIMARY STUDENTS:
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY

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by

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for the course E591---Exit Project
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INTRODUCTION

Television viewing has become the new American pastime.

Today, ninety-six percent of all United States homes have at least one working television (TV). The average set is on over six hours a day, with youngsters between the ages of six and eleven watching television on the average of three-and-a-half hours a day. By the age of eighteen, the average youth will have spent the equivalent of two-and-a-half uninterrupted years (21,900 hours) watching television--45 percent more time than he or she has spend in classroom education. (Finn 1980:473)

In so many ways, family life now centers on the set and the broadcast schedule. For the busy mother, TV is the "free" babysitter. For children, TV is the always accessible teller of stories. For teens, television is the purveyor of popular culture. (Corder-Bolz 1981:16) Television is here to stay! This medium is too vast and profitable to be a passing fad. Today, television is reaching new markets through use of satellites, cable stations and video discs. It is predicted that soon, every person in the United States will own their own TV set. With this overwhelming technology, steps need to be laid for effective use of television programs.

Television is neither "bad" nor "good". What determines the value, or lack of value, are the programs family members choose to watch. Most families are naive and thoughtless receivers of commercial television. These viewers are unaware of the extent to which they are influenced by the distorted facts of television and at the same time, fail to benefit from television's many rewards.

FACTORS IN VIEWING TELEVISION

Most children don't think while they're watching television. As a result, the time they spend in front of the television screen may prove detrimental to their success in school.

A physiopsychologist in Boston studied the brain-wave patterns of children watching television. He found that the children, regardless of what they were watching, had an "alpha" brain-wave pattern.

The alpha brain-wave pattern--one of four normal brain-wave patterns--is a sign that the mind is relaxed. Individuals in an alpha state of mind don't focus their thinking actively on any one subject but instead allow their thoughts to wander. For all practical purposes, then, watching television causes children to put their brains "in neutral."

School activities, on the other hand, produce a "beta" brain-wave pattern in children who concentrate on the subject being taught. The 5,000 hours of television that children watch before they enter school, then, doesn't prepare them for success in the classroom. This is why teachers say that today children have shorter attention spans, less curiosity, and less enthusiasm for learning. The children have been conditioned to expect entertainment, not instruction. (Ashley 1981:13)

A study published by a university in Australia claimed that television viewing is almost exclusively an activity of the right side of the brain. The right side of the brain is the center for sight, hearing, and emotions. The left side of the brain, however, governs speaking and logical thinking. The researchers continue to explain that most television programs have eight to ten visual images a minute, presenting more information than viewers can analyze and process quickly. As a result, most viewers stop trying to evaluate what is seen and just let the noncritical right side of the brain process the messages.

Ashley found that children could be taught to think, to concentrate, and to use their left side of the brain while they viewed television. He then stated that students could learn to analyze the visual images on TV in the same way that they understand the meaning of the printed page. Ashley then suggested a television-viewing-skills component be added to the language arts curriculum.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main problem of this study deals with determining the effects of a critical viewing program on primary students both at home and at school. The television set, which is heavily viewed daily, has unlimited potential

as an educational tool, and as such, should be utilized by the millions of parents and teachers in this country.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to identify and analyze the effects of critical television viewing on primary-aged students. This knowledge could then be applied toward improved viewing habits of both the child and the family.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The first part of the study analyzes critical television viewing from the school's, parent's and family's viewpoints. This section relates the findings of studies on the effect of implementing a critical viewing program. The study also reports methods to achieve positive educational results from television viewing.

The remainder of the study is divided into four academic subject areas. The annotations present effective, tested classroom ideas to harness the vast potential of the television set. It is this author's belief that a useful study should not only inform the reader, but should also show practical applications of the presented material.

ANNOTATIONS

THE USE OF A CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING PROGRAM

The School's Viewpoint

Corder-Bolz, Charles R., "A Program to Teach Critical Viewing", PTA Today, April, 1981, p. 17.

Corder-Bolz, the Director of Learning and Media Research at Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), focused on eight primary skills: the ability to distinguish program elements; make judicious use of viewing time; understand the psychological implications of advertising; distinguish fact from fiction; recognize and appreciate differing views; understand the content and style of dramatic presentations, public affairs, news, and other programming; and understand the relationship between television programming and the printed word. The project's philosophy was to reach elementary students through parents and teachers. Activities were designed for children (games and stories), parents (newsletters entitled Television: A Family Focus), and teachers (Teacher Cue Cards suggesting how TV can be used to teach language arts, math concepts, geography, history, science, health, and social studies).

Finn, Peter, "Developing Critical Television Viewing Skills", Educational Forum, 44, May, 1980, pp. 473-482.

Finn listed some undesirable effects of TV: decreased communication among family members, less family activities, stereotyping of ethnic groups, distorted news perceptions, and developing questionable consumer values. Finn then divided specific correctives into three categories: Influence TV content (exert pressure on stations and federal legislature); Reduce viewing time (allows for other activities); Critical viewing (provides citizens, through education in the school, with the skills to watch TV critically, make judicious use of their viewing time, and link TV to educational endeavors). Critical viewing is based on TV being a learning tool. TV uses visual and auditory perception; employs music, color, movement, and repetition; entertains and informs; hides and reveals; portrays past, present, and the future; and is fun to watch. Critical viewing can promote increased conversation, exposure to new lifestyles and thoughts, pro-social behavior, and a concern for social problems. Classroom activities could include: role play, simulation, small group discussions, field trips, creative writing, games, interviews and polls.

Dorr, Aimee, Graves, Sheryl Brown, Phelps, Erin, "Television Literacy for Young Children", Journal of Communication, 30, Summer, 1980, pp. 71-83.

Dorr, Graves, and Phelps incorporated three curricula for kindergarten and second/third grade. The industry curriculum taught students about the production and economic systems of TV. The process curriculum taught processes and sources of evaluating TV content. The social reasoning curriculum taught children role-taking skills. Post tests showed that children could learn much about TV in a short time (6 hours) and could apply the information when asked to reason about the reality of TV content. Groups that were taught the curriculum, did far better than those not exposed to the ideas on tests. It will take, however, a concerned effort on the part of parents, teachers, and children if positive effects are to be seen. Pressure on the industry to program more responsibly and pressure by parents to exercise more viewing control are necessary if improvements in viewing habits are to be made.

Anderson, James A., "The Theoretical Lineage of Critical Viewing Curricula", Journal of Communication, 30, Summer, 1980, pp. 64-70.

Anderson had four underlying constructs in his critical viewing curricula: intervention (designed to teach students to recognize certain types of negative portrayals and alternative ways of viewing them); goal attainment (directed students toward motivations for watching and developed evaluative standards for making decisions about media use); cultural understanding (viewed TV as an index of the culture from which it springs); visual literacy (focused on understanding messages and controlling their consequences by being sophisticated about media techniques). Curriculum development is then tied to three forces: commitment by state school officials in terms of money, time, and space; the production and marketing of textbook publishers of instructional materials; and the initiation of pre-service and in-service instructional support in teacher education institutions.

Withrow, Frank B., "Why We Need Critical Viewing Skills", Today's Education, 69, September/October, 1980, pp. 55-56.

Withrow stated that critical television viewing skills enable individuals to use TV wisely as both an entertainment and educational source. Many sociologists consider TV to be the most persistent and pervasive single activity most Americans engage in. Withrow outlined four educational levels and the expectations of each: elementary (learn that TV distorts the real world); middle school (learn to establish priorities on the quality and quantity of TV viewing); secondary level (to analyze TV and make choices on how to use it); post high school level (adults need to understand their own use, and the role they play in monitoring children's use of it. Through the use of the outlined ideas, the viewer would be able to: understand and evaluate opposing views; understand one's own motivation for watching TV; understand the consumer's role in TV; understand the differences between TV and other media; and lastly understand that TV news and other programs have time constraints that limit in-depth reporting.

Steenland, Sally, "An Activist Approach to Critical TV Viewing", Media & Methods, 15, October, 1978, pp. 22-25, 63-64.

Steenland stated that the airwaves belong to the people and are operated by trustees for the public. Therefore, a certain amount of public participation is clearly advised. The main goal of curricula in TV education would be to develop an intense critical awareness in each student regarding television's structures, messages, and influences. The four steps in the critical awareness plan are: 1. Become aware of TV's pervasiveness (how much TV is viewed and what patterns of behavior exist); 2. Don't just watch TV: monitor it (types of transportation used, occupations, commercials, stereotypes, omissions, products); 3. Understand the relationship and obligations of local stations to their communities as well as the realities of broadcasting (what are important community issues); 4. Discuss TV and radio issues in relationship to the First Amendment (rights of free speech). TV shapes the public more than we may know. The air waves, however, belong to the people and awareness is of paramount importance.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "What Are They Really Saying?: Critical TV Viewing", Teacher, 96, November, 1978, pp. 28, 30, 32.

Potter stated that more and more teachers are realizing that they can capitalize on TV to build concepts and skills. She looked at several teachers and their use of TV in the classroom. Sklar using commercials, found that there were twice as much commercials in children's shows as in the prime-time adult programs. Faith, a kindergarten teacher encouraged her class to check the validity of commercials. The students tried the same experiments with paper towels, cleansers, and soap as advertised on TV. Stoving's objective was to get children to discover on their own that they need to think about the true quality of a product and then base the buying decision on its merit, not on the TV message. Ganek's students spent five months researching aspects of television to improve reading. Ganek's project helped her children become critical TV views as interest and reading ability improved.

Gerbner, George, "Television: The American Schoolchild's National Curriculum Day In and Day Out", PTA Today, April, 1981, pp. 3-5.

Gerbner dealt with prime-time dramatic programs (8:00-11:00 p.m.) and children's program hours (week-end mornings and afternoons) in his study. Television has reduced loneliness and isolation, enriched the poorest segments with other cultures and ways of life, and most importantly, given us a means for educating and governing the masses. In return, television demands no mobility, literacy, or concentrated effort. However, if TV is viewed critically, the 22,000 commercials annually, the crime rate ten times as rampant as in the real world, and the amount of violence displayed, the watcher will realize the above as parts of the television making process not reality.

Singer, Dorothy G., Zuckerman, Diana M., Singer, Jerome L., "Helping Elementary School Children Learn About TV", Journal of Communication, 30, Summer, 1980, pp. 84-93.

Singer, Zuckerman, and Singer attempted to teach children about television from a curriculum based on "hidden aspects" of TV (commercials, violence, lighting, zooms, slow-motion, and stereotyping. After the curricula, a number of significant gains in knowing how TV works, the production, and the techniques were made. TV was also used as a means of teaching vocabulary words, writing skills, math, and critical thinking skills. They reported that heavy viewing by young children (elementary children) have an added increase in violence (a response and imitation to what they have seen). The last correlation the authors made was that children's viewing habits reflected those of their parents (children tend to watch what their parents watch).

Colder-Bolz, Charles R., "Neither 'Bad' Nor 'Good', Television Is Too Often Misunderstood", PTA Today, April, 1981, pp. 16-18.

Colder-Bolz stated that children: are not aware of the program's plot; often think that situation comedies are made by putting a television camera in a family's home; base their understanding of a program largely on visual presentations. He listed seven suggestions for critical television viewing: 1. Be selective (people should watch a program because they want to); 2. Understand television formats (news, commentaries, documentaries, musicals, etc); 3. Understand TV products (television programming is bought by advertisers so that they can sell you their products); 4. Evaluate TV portrayals (compare TV presentations with other sources of information); 5. Ask questions about programs (help your children ask questions, compare impressions of the programs); 6. Appreciate good television (become aware of good acting, scripts, and camera work); 7. Use television as an educational resource (a lot of rich sources of information, also use books, magazines, and newspapers).

Sprafkin, Joyce N., Rubinstein, Eli A., "Children's Television Viewing Habits and Prosocial Behavior: A Field Correlation Study", Journal of Broadcasting, 23, Summer, 1979, pp. 265-276.

The authors reviewed TV research that indicated regular entertainment programming contains socially desirable content, and that child viewers can learn positive lessons from such presentations. The major goal was to examine the relationship between children's viewing habits and the degree they exhibited prosocial behavior in school. Control variables were sex, grade, social class, and academic achievement. Questionnaires were administered to the 393 children with the result that females, children of relatively well educated parents, and high academic achievers tend to behave more frequently in prosocial ways in the classroom than do males, children with less educated parents, and low academic achievers. Also, children who preferred highly prosocial favorite programs tended to behave in prosocial ways in school. Boys tend to watch more aggressive programs while girls watch more prosocial. Children who could benefit from watching prosocial programs don't watch them and implies the programs need to appeal to a wider child audience.

Ferris, Charles D., "The FCC Takes A Hard Look At Television", Today's Education, 69, September/October, 1980, pp. 66-68.

Ferris stated that television's phenomenal power lies in the fact that more people can have instantaneous access to the same event than ever before. Revenues in cable and subscription television doubled between 1977 and 1978, and again in 1978 and 1979. With the growing television network, Public Broadcasting Service is the only network to interconnect all its member stations by satellite--beginning to transmit three program services simultaneously. With this in mind, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) no longer debates whether children learn from TV, instead they argue over what it is that television teaches them. The FCC is also concerned about the lack of services commercial television provides children. The FCC realizes too that no technology, by itself, will ever replace the need for a well developed educational system. The new technologies, however, will offer teachers many options in the future and will continue to bring the world into the classroom.

Ashley, Warren J., "Elimination of TV Is Not the Answer: Using It Properly Can Pay Dividends", PTA Today, April, 1981, pp. 11-12.

Ashley stated that timing and type of question asked is very important in critical television viewing. Questions that require students to analyze and apply concepts are much more important than memorization of facts. He devised Television Observation Laboratory (TOL) and it has five steps: 1. Teachers show videotapes; 2. At five minute intervals, conduct a discussion; 3. Questions focus the discussion on analyzing the viewed material; 4. Show another five minute segment of the program; 5. Question and repeat again until the program is over. Students improved verbal skills and were more aware and critical of what was viewed on TV. The greatest impact of TOL was on students not doing well in school. The student's thinking skills, relative to television, improved by 20 percent.

Kincheloe, Joe L., "TV Is Here To Stay: Use It", Clearing House, September, 1980, pp. 44-45.

Kincheloe reported that teachers should use television as a positive learning tool. Unfortunately, programming is accepted by marketability not quality. The programs critically acclaimed will be more than likely dropped from the viewing schedule. Four ways of implementing commercial television in the classroom are: 1. As a social common denominator (super way to establish rapport with students), 2. Understand the students (a teacher must understand the students to be effective and through TV can understand them by keeping in touch with their common experiences), 3. Critical thinking development (development of thinking skills can be accessed by all students regardless of reading ability), 4. Starting point for skill development (if used properly, TV can enhance communication skills--reading, writing, and listening). Objectives could include program content, critical assessments, implications, and ideas generated in the student's own mind. Teachers can lead students to see TV as a sophisticated learning tool that can be used in an infinite number of ways long after a completion of classroom learning.

Kahn, Linda, "The Big Picture: NEA Involvement In TV", Today's Education, 69, September/October, 1980, pp. 64-65.

Kahn stated that: teachers say students seem to know more about world affairs and historical events due to TV; TV viewing curriculum brought students and parents closer together by giving them a common area of interest; "Project Awareness" began with teachers developing classroom projects according to language arts and social studies the first year and consumer education and science projects the second year. Parent/teacher workshops have attempted to convince parents that the problem of TV rests with them and not the TV industry. Kahn also reported on the effects of the National Education Association (NEA); WNET-TV in New York; Prime Time School Television (funded by the American Broadcasting Company); CBS Reading Program; although not listed, NBC has also funded TV viewing materials; and the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA). All the above have and are continuing to influence the constructive and creative use of television.

The Parent's Viewpoint

Williams, Frederick, Smart, Margaret E., Epstein, Robert H., "Use of Commercial Television in Parent and Child Interaction", Journal of Broadcasting, 23, Spring, 1979, pp. 229-235.

The authors stated that the aim was to promote interaction which would result in desired changes in the child's behavior and development. The study broke the treatment groups into: Parent-Child TV Interaction (PCTV), Parent-Child Interaction (PCI), and no Parent-Child Interaction (Control group). The parents in the PCI and PCTV groups were to engage in at least ten minutes of interaction three times a week for four weeks. In the PCI group the topic could be anything except television. The results showed that the PCTV could easily incorporate TV experiences into verbal exchanges. Length of interaction time increased in the PCTV as opposed to the PCI group. When all three groups were graphed according to Utterance Frequency, TV Related Statements, Topic-Setting, and Extensions (elaborations), the PCTV group came out on top, especially strong in extension areas. With television as a central focus, conversation was much longer and suggests a positive use of television in parent and child interaction.

Gross, Lynne Schafer, Walsh, R. Patricia, "Factors Affecting Parental Control Over Children's Television Viewing: A Pilot Study", Journal of Broadcasting, 24, Summer, 1980, pp. 411-419.

Gross and Walsh stated that children are more likely to receive, retain, and utilize educational material presented over TV if they interact with their parents. The researchers surveyed 100 families and found no relation between parental control and parental education or income levels. The crucial family variable in parental control was the number of TV sets in the home. As the number of TV sets increased, parents exerted less control. Specifically, as the number of sets increased, children were allowed to watch more adult shows; parents watched TV with their children less; children voluntarily told their parents what they watched less; and parents asked what their children watched, less. The authors also found that parents who watch more TV have children that watch more TV. Girls were found to have more rules about TV watching, and more parental control of the knob than boys. The authors concluded that with a limited number of sets, child/parent watching together increases.

Sokoloff, Harris, "The Threat and the Promise", Media & Methods, 18, September, 1980, pp. 4, 22.

Sokoloff stated that television influenced the way people think, act, and feel. Quoting Abt, "A little TV may be good for most children, and a lot of TV (over two hours a day) is very probably bad for most children". Research cited supports the view that TV should be supervised and that children and parents both will gain beneficial effects of TV if taught positive viewing skills. Active viewing (synonymous with critical viewing) enables viewers to be aware of what is being learned from television.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "TV Talk-Gloria Kirshner Talks About Parent Participation", Teacher, 97, April, 1980, pp. 12-16.

Potter interviewed Kirshner on parent participation in TV viewing. Kirshner felt that parents can use TV at home to open up communication with their children. Through the use of television, parents can help children define their values, learn to make decisions, and discover who they are and what they might become. Her goal, at Parent Participation TV Workshop, is to help parents lead their children from the TV set to active participation in life, reading, and critical thinking. The workshops cover everything from health and careers, to value clarification and special education, to talking about each other's feelings and emotions.

Jacobs, Victoria Bichan, "Adults Need Skills, Too, To Watch and Understand TV", PTA Today, April, 1981, p. 25.

Jacobs stated that if parents and teachers are to be "television guides" to children and students they must be trained to use television wisely. The Boston University curriculum contained four modules: Television Literacy (presentation of the processes and language of TV); Persuasive Programming (concentrated on TV persuading the viewer to think, behave, vote, or buy certain ideas or products through commercials); Entertainment Programming (portrayal of sex, violence and stereotyping; shaping of social values and personal family role models; variety of cultural and artistic offerings); and Informational Offerings (64 percent of American adults get their information about news and current events from television). Jacobs felt that technological advancements will not wait for the children of today to rise to critical viewing participants, and hence the lead must begin with, and carry through to, the youth. The project then sought to provide information to parents and teachers so that they could improve their own TV literacy and thereby be more responsible "TV guides" to children.

Heald, Gary R., "Television Viewing Guides and Parental Recommendations", Journalism Quarterly, 57, Spring 1980, pp. 141-144.

Heald interviewed 114 families that had volunteered for the study and sent each family one of three types of viewing guides: Reduce Antisocial Viewing, Increase Prosocial Viewing, Reduce Antisocial/Increase Prosocial Viewing, with one fourth of the families in the control group. Heald recorded the number of antisocial programs parents discouraged and the number of prosocial programs parents encouraged. The results showed that parents discouraged antisocial programs on the average of 3.8 for the Increase Prosocial Viewing guides and 3.0 for the Reduce Antisocial guides. The results also showed that parents encouraged prosocial programs on the average of 2.6 in the Reduce Antisocial/Increase Prosocial Viewing guides. Thus guides which either encourage or discourage viewing of specific shows will increase the number of restricted programs of concerned parents. Viewing guides which both encourage/discourage program viewing offer no advantage.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Workshops For TV Literacy", Teacher, 96, September, 1978, pp. 46-51.

Potter examined some of the workshops available for TV literacy or critical TV viewing. Television Awareness Training (TAT) is designed to help consumers, parents, and community groups become more aware of both the positive and negative roles of television in our lives. Accompanying the workshop is a 304 page manual. Parent Participation TV Workshops teach parents how to watch and discuss television with their children. Teachers Guides to Television (TGT) has provided teachers pre-broadcast information for ten years. PTA TV Action Workshops trained participants in monitoring television programs for violence and in the "how, where, and when" of sending letters to the appropriate local and national broadcasters and sponsors. The PTA Action Center has published a helpful pamphlet: "Television and Your Children: Some Positive Approaches to Improving the Television Viewing Habits of Your Children".

The Family's Viewpoint

Lull, James, "Choosing Television Programs By Family Vote", Communication Quarterly, 26, Fall, 1978, pp. 53-57.

Lull analyzed the family decision making process in selecting a television program during the prime time viewing hours. The results showed that the verbal interaction includes a tremendous outpouring of statements of program preference, opinion, and information with very little inquiring of the feelings of other family members. Parents were significantly more information-givers and children were significantly more preference-givers. Fathers seemed to be the most influential decision maker in the family. Young children were at the bottom of the decision making scale. Although young children had the least prime time viewing power, it does not mean that they would not watch the voted program. Finally, Lull stated that joint viewing, and conflict over program preferences is normal behavior even in multi-set homes. There is nearly always a preferred set--in most cases a color receiver in the living room.

Ploughoff, Milton E., "Family TV Viewing Can Be A Good Experience For Everyone Involved", PTA Today, April, 1981, pp. 26-28.

Ploughoff concluded that television: is more colorful, interesting, lively, and up-to-date than textbooks; transcends the generation gap by presenting adult and children material for all to watch; and provided ample opportunity for discussions about the programs being viewed. The three types of programs, entertainment (situation comedies, soap operas, detective shows, dramas); commercials; and news and information programs all differ in the approach but all three try to entertain the viewer. Critical viewing then, looks at television's purposes and through family discussions of the viewed material (during station breaks or between programs) the child will be better consumer educated and more verbal in observation, thinking, and criticism skills.

Mohr, Phillip J., "Efficacy of the Family Viewing Concept: A Test of Assumptions", Central States Speech Journal, 30, Winter, 1979, pp. 342-351.

Mohr sampled 5,167 children to find viewing patterns of children and parents. Two questionnaires were developed to include information on demographic characteristics and specific broadcast programs. Analysis revealed that the peak period of evening viewing generally occurred between 6:30 and 8:00 p.m. (CST) with percentages reporting viewing ranging from 52% to 75.5%. Sizeable proportions (62% down to 23%) continued to view between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. Boys also tended to be a larger percentage of TV viewers. For the 68 listed programs, the average percentages who reported "no guidance" was 85.2% and 83.2% of the parents and children respectively. In forty-three of the sixty-eight programs listed, consensus of attitudes among the children and their parents were found. Hence, very little parental guidance was evidence. This fact only strengthens the need for parental education and an introduction to critical viewing skills.

Ward, Donna Lynd, "Make Commercial TV Work For You", Audiovisual Instruction, 24, March, 1979, pp. 44-45.

Ward found that several factors influence learning from television: Relevance of a TV program (children remember content appropriate to situations in which they normally find themselves); Reality in a TV program (tradition roles are more accepted than nontraditional occupations as well as violence being more credible on newsreel-type footage); Culture (important in determining the impact of television on children). These findings and others indicate that every viewer has a personal "filter" that helps the individual to evaluate each program. The school's role then is not only to help students gather information from print, but also from television. Ward pointed out that the best way to influence a TV program or commercial (either positively or negatively) is to write letters to the stations playing the tape. The stations are subject to public criticism and usually will increase playing or remove the desired piece. Lastly, children are affected by the TV just as they are affected by other events in their lives, but they are not sponges indiscriminately soaking up everything.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Making the Home-School TV Connection: Parent Conferences", Teacher, 94, May/June, 1977, pp. 33-37.

Potter devised a list of pointers on TV use during a parent/teacher conference. Included in the list were: Vocabulary development (discuss and use the words and phrases after the program); Reading enrichment (lead children to TV-Based books (Tarzan, Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mysteries, The Six Million Dollar Man); Discussion possibilities (parents answer questions and begin discussions); Use reference materials (help children use TV-Guide, television sections from newspapers); Limit viewing (involve children in after-school activities--sports, scouting, lessons, clubs); Encourage letter writing and phone calling to stations; Relate TV to real life (point out the contemporary ties--government, sports, environment); Using commercials (point out the good and bad aspects of advertising). The parent made one outstanding comment: she believed that since she had bought the set, she was in the best position to control it and that she had the responsibility of helping her children use it wisely.

Brown, Mac H., Swick, Kevin J., "Television and The Family: Alternatives and Options", Kappa Delta Pi Record, 15, December, 1978, pp. 60-61.

Brown and Swick stated that people watch TV because of habit, desire, interest, escape, and other reasons. Television can also momentarily let people forget their problems. Children develop their social habits through interaction with the environment. However, when TV becomes the socialization agent for children, technology replaces the needed human interaction with significant adults. The authors list five ways parents can help children use television as a positive force in their lives: Refrain from using TV as a babysitting device (involvement of children in household jobs brings them in the family arena); Be selective of the shows being viewed (eliminate negative and encourage positive shows); Establish a family viewing time (everyone watches programs together); Establish a family discussion session; Plan activities and offer children alternatives to television watching.

Macy, Virginia, "The Need To Create A Discriminating Public", PTA Today, April, 1981, pp. 36-37.

Macy stated that a large, discriminating viewing public will, in the long run, influence the quality of television. The National PTA has urged members to: monitor TV programs viewed by their children; limit the amount of television viewed; write letters to stations and advertisers whether the show was good or bad; get involved in the licensing process of the stations. The critical viewer must also recognize the difference between realism and fantasy, be aware that crime on television "exceeds" crime in real life, and know that television does not always portray the actual trauma associated with crime and violence in real life. A good family viewing dialogue could: provide clues to the parent about a child's interests, feelings, fears, and perhaps misconceptions; provide opportunities to discuss delicate subjects or values; provide verbal skills for children; provide for analyzing plots and characters; lead to other sources of information on the subject; and provide a forum to discuss differing views and promote tolerance of many views.

Wagner, Hilmar, "An Educator Looks at Home Television--TV Or Not TV: That Is The Question", Education, 99, Spring 1979, pp. 303-308.

Wagner listed the strengths and weaknesses of TV viewing. The strengths include: unlimited educational and intellectual growth, enrichment opportunities, stimulated imagination, careers, history, cultures, current events, and vocabulary development. Weaknesses include: too much violence, too many viewers are passive spectators, limits the interactions with others, health could suffer (eye strain, lack of needed sleep, lack of physical activity), exposure to questionable morals, and too much contrast between the TV world and the Real world. All the weaknesses could be offset, however, by a critical viewing program in the home. Stated recommendations for parents were: make decisions on children viewing, write program sponsors expressing pleasure or displeasure, discuss TV presentations with their children, to not let television become the focal point of family life (let it become a treat not a constant companion), to make good children's literature available, and to set aside a time to discuss program content and open up the communication channels.

USES OF CRITICAL VIEWING IN THE CLASSROOM

Gueulette, David, "Television: The Hidden Curriculum", Lifelong Learning: The Adult Years, 3, January, 1980, pp. 4-7, 35.

Gueulette argued that the mere fact that television is in 96 percent of American homes and is looked at an average of six hours a day constitutes a revolution in education. Unlike school, TV provides an education that continues throughout a lifetime, offering adult education for the entire nation through news shows. Gueulette stated that television along with other visual mass media does more to shape mass behavior than any other source. TV then is not only the major force in education, but also in socialization as well. Gueulette concluded saying that the very least educators can do is to create the techniques that will insure that viewers will be critical and willing to challenge the dictated reality throughout their television learning lives.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Live! From Your Classroom", Instructor and Teacher, 98, May, 1982, pp. 34-36.

Potter reported on how seven schools used TV as an instructional tool. Only a couple of cases involved primary students, however, the rest could be modified to fit the primary level. Neuwirth, from North Carolina, developed a homework program that gave children nightly practice in identifying main characters, plot, and conflict. Each child had to view at least one show nightly and write a few sentences about it. The students also wrote books about their favorite TV characters. Pottle, from Maine, had her students critique three programs and describe personality traits, main characters, and plot. Other ideas were script reading; students doing their own informational videotapes (nutrition, science, the family, nouns); students collected and compiled news stories of the week and aired a twenty minute news videotape to the school. All these TV related ideas led the students to a more complete knowledge of television and its methods.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Light Up 1980 with 15 TV Resolutions", Teacher, 97, January, 1980, pp. 24-30.

Potter presented fifteen practical TV literacy ideas to use at school. These include: Survey the TV scene (get to know the current popular shows); Watch a few (watch your students' three favorite shows at least once); Make the school connection (link shows to school subjects, make a time line with shows according to historical period); TV Guides as a Reference (use the guide to help tie in TV with units taught); Preview/Review (have children tell of their favorite show); How much can they take (record times viewing TV); Awareness day (gripe session about TV, or good things about TV); Read all about it (add TV-based books to the class library); Careers day (invite a television person in to talk); Commercials day (students test claims of commercials); Monitor day (students tally items while watching a show (commercials, violent acts)); Write-in day (write letters to a TV star, sponsor, or the station); Personality day (students discuss what they know about their favorite TV star); Literacy evaluation day (review what has been learned and present each child a TV Literacy Certificate); Start over again.

Rankin, Pauline M., Roberts, Charlie W., "Television and Teaching", The Reading Teacher, 35, October, 1981, pp. 30-32.

Rankin and Roberts reported the use of television as a springboard to instruction in various academic areas. Areas of involvement are: Reading (TV scripts as well as TV-based books--Hardy Boys, Little House on the Prairie); Writing (compositions on the student's favorite TV show; Make use of grammatical errors to teach a unit on spelling and punctuation); Economics (discuss job market and TV character's occupations); Math (charts and graphs for time spent watching TV, favorite show preferences); Vocabulary (decode words through context clues and incorporate such words into speaking vocabulary); Language Arts (locate times of shows in TV-Guide or the local newspaper's TV section). To critically view a program, parents should ask non-threatening questions such as: What did you see?; Which scenes were outstanding to you?

Language Arts

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "TV-Based Q & A, Teacher, 96, February, 1979, pp. 32, 35-36.

Potter used television as the "magic learning key" for a class of primarily first grade repeaters. Through the use of TV shows (Happy Days, Chips, Laverne and Shirley, The Incredible Hulk, etc.) she taught thinking skills. The thinking skills were divided into thirteen areas; context clues (what does a character mean when he/she says); classification; prediction of outcomes (what might happen if); seeing relationships; analogies (___ is to ___ as ___ is to ___); inference (why would a program be interrupted); relevance (why is this important to you); sequence (what is the order); fact/fantasy (could this be real); moods and emotions (what feelings do you notice); cause and effect (what causes the reaction and what are the results of it); figurative language (do you take all comments literally); details (describe the scenery or character). Other questions to be asked are endless. Many students enjoy getting started this way and then move to other media-books, magazines, etc.

Winkeljohann, Sister Rosemary, "Queries: What Is The Role of Television in the Language Arts Program?", Language Arts, 58, January, 1981, pp. 100-102.

Winkeljohann questioned Ray about the use of television in the classroom. She gave four areas of use and improvement in the language arts program: Literature (screen dramatizations of classic stories and novels. She advised that the librarian have these books in stock as students will flock to get them); Reading Skills (many students who don't learn to read traditionally, use "Readalong" a series that uses graphic visualization to teach basic vocabulary); Composition (viewing such shows as "The Write Channel" have turned students on to writing); Skills Essential to Learning (the show "Thinkabout" helps children acquire and use the skills necessary to be independent learners and problem-solvers). Television itself, being a language art, should and could be easily integrated into the classroom. Through using reading, speaking, and listening activities, television extends the conventional language arts program. One last note: Libraries were swamped with new card applicants after an episode of "Happy Days" when Fonzie got his first library card.

Stecher, Judith, "TV As a Two-Way Street in Learning", Teacher, 94, November, 1976, pp. 46-52.

Stecher, a language and oral development consultant, found television to be a valuable stimulus to language expansion. She listed several ways in which a child's language arts skills could be improved: Write to a star (use TV in teaching letter-writing skills); Behind the scenes (visit a TV station and invite a television personality to class); Speaking up (write letters of encouragement or discouragement to TV stations); Mailbox to the world (Big Blue Marble TV series has a free pen pal feature that has already involved more than half a million children worldwide); A TV corner (interest center to integrate out-of-school life with school time, have a TV-Guide in the center for reference); "Soaps" for skills (obtain current scripts and then view the shows critically). Stecher also listed addresses of popular shows for children to write to.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Using TV To Teach Thinking Skills", Today's Education, 69, September/October, 1980, pp. 53-54.

Potter had begun the year by introducing prediction, sequence, and comparison skills as related to the TV show "Batman". She broadened the first grade curriculum to include plot, stars, characters, and questions that would teach children to think, analyze, and extrapolate. Television-questioning experience increased the youngster's verbal comprehension on cognitive tests. The use of television related activities to teach thinking skills seemed to encourage a broader use of these skills. Potter then began a library of TV-related books (based on TV programs, stars and related TV games). Previous nonreaders read everything from the latest book about Fonzie to books like Sounder. In spite of so much television-related reading, the students also read standard texts, newspapers, and magazines.

Wright, Jone Perryman, Laminack, Lester, "First Graders Can Be Critical Listeners and Readers", Language Arts, 59, February, 1982, pp. 133-136.

The authors reviewed a curriculum plan used to teach about commercials. Repetitive jingles, exaggerated phrases and personification of inanimate objects are used to help the viewer remember the product. Structural devices include editing, movement, composition, sound, color, and lighting. The reading and writing activities were designed to help first graders become alert to commercial's techniques. The steps are: What is a Commercial (discuss purpose and effect); Listening activity (hear commercial words such as fresh, extra strength, new, lasts longer, gentle); Discuss the product claims (On a chart record: product's claim, description or sample of the product, validity of producer's claim); Scrapbook was made and each of four groups compiled pictures and ads with their topic (soap, toothpaste, food, pet food); Write claim for a newly invented product. The unit should teach that commercials: are made to sell things; make a promise; don't always live up to their promise; use music, words, pictures, and movement.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Learning to Listen: TV Can Help", Teacher, 95, November, 1977, pp. 40-46.

Children and adults of today live in a world of loud noise. Radios, televisions, and stereo tapes bombard us with many sounds daily. With success in school so closely related to the understanding of oral directions and spoken information, teachers must develop critical listening skills in children. Some ideas Potter suggested were: Detail and Sequence (one child retells an episode from TV and the rest of the class listen to check for proper show sequence and details); What's Missing? (read news stories asking children to recall details. Read the story again and omit details and have the students identify deleted parts); Vocabulary Development (make lists of TV words new to them, listen for multiple meaning words, and television slang); Sounds and Musical Themes (have students identify instruments and sound effects used in theme songs, also discuss music and feelings); Taking Notes (note important points of shows for retelling. Taking notes demands close attention and selectivity); Productive Waiting (while waiting for lunch, gym, or recess make up TV riddles and ask them in a normal tone--forces students to listen very carefully).

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "What Happens Next? TV Variations", Teacher, 95, March, 1978, pp. 32-35.

Potter developed sequence-of-events games that were totally different from the usual fill-in-the-blank or write the number of order sheets. These included: Steve Austin's Next Move (lines of dialogue were placed on cards and the cards were mixed up with the student having to place the cards in order of spoken dialogue); Strip Stories (groups discuss and write down five events that occurred in a show and then rearrange them so that another group has to sequence them in order); Come to Order (children name favorite characters and behaviors typical of them and then decide what might happen next if...); Effect and Cause (the class plays oral sequencing games); Future Sequencing (consider what the characters will do next, if the student can justify the prediction he or she can join the "Predictor Club"); Minimoments (List these five points--introduction, problem, search for solution, solution, and ending. In a program like Happy Days the children must locate the above parts). These ideas, as well as others, can be added to the list of creative ways to tie TV into the school curriculum.

Reading

Lee, Barbara, "Prime Time in the Classroom", Journal of Communication, 30, Winter, 1980, pp. 175-180.

Lee reported that 262 teachers and 921 students used TV scripts in their classrooms to stimulate both reading skills and critical viewing of television. Eighty percent of the teachers, seventy percent of the students, and ninety-six percent of the parents said they were very interested in future use of another TV script. More than eighty percent of the teachers and parents felt it is likely that this kind of reading program increased student interest in and enjoyment of reading. 85% of the parents mentioned parent/child relationship benefits (promoted closeness, provided a shared experience, encouraged viewing and discussion with their children, and offered a chance to share their child's school work). 67% of the students reported viewing the program with a parent, however, only 41% of the students talked about the program with their parents viewing. The one negative aspect of the study was that only six percent of the teachers sent a letter or note to parents informing them of the project. For wider parent participation, outside publicity (newspapers, television) might be used.

Splaine, John E., "Television and Its Influence on Reading", Educational Technology, 18, June, 1978, pp. 15-19.

Splaine stated that the viewing of television has potential for stimulating reading. The apparent success of "Sesame Street" and "Electric Company" suggest the possibility of using children's culture, and combining it with media technology. Television has two major advantages over books: it reaches children at an early age, and it enters directly in the home. These factors are especially important for economically disadvantaged homes. Splaine reported on a study by Odland and Beach to determine the five most popular titles in school libraries in the state. Little House books were in the top of the findings as were Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew Mystery Stories. The findings also report that of the top 15 books most were made into either TV shows or TV movies. This should suggest then that librarians and teachers need to be familiar with and be able to recommend books that have been adapted for viewing use.

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "Using TV Reference Materials", Teacher, 94, December, 1976, pp. 80-81.

Potter reviewed ways in which children decided what programs to watch. Most said they turned dials, listened to a friend's recommendation, or listened to previews on TV. Not one student hinted at using TV reference materials (TV-Guide, local newspaper TV sections). In steps to introduce such a practice, the teacher should start out with conversations of favorite TV shows located in the guides. Additional activities could include: introduce vocabulary such as daytime, continued, repeat, serial, comedy, and EW; create TV riddles using TV reference materials with a partner; classify Saturday morning programs; discuss value of information and entertainment programs; keep records of personal program choices for one week (discuss the number, kind, and quality of viewed programs).

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "The Newspaper-TV Connection: A Way to Teach Skills", Teacher, 95, December, 1977, pp. 36-38.

Potter reported that newspapers provide an inexpensive source for developing social studies, and basic language skills, as well as supporting instruction in classifying, scanning, comparing, and judging. Ideas to stress should include: Introduction (brief account of newspaper's parts such as the index on the front page); Vocabulary hunting (look for compound words, words with prefixes, blends, contractions and so on); TV coverage (start with the TV section and then move on to the news, sports, comics); Clip articles from the paper and have the children classify them and put them up on the bulletin board (the group must all decide on the categories and selections before the board can be assembled. This project should be spread over a few days so that one or two students will not decide everything for the group just to get the board done). Lastly, have the children read a news story and watch the TV news. Which report was more in depth? Why?

Brown, Don W., "Reading TV: Today's Basic", Educational Leadership, 36, December, 1978, pp. 216-218, 220.

Brown stated that no other mode of communication can approach the present capacity of TV to transmit--through colorful visual imagery--the precise, the logical, and sometimes the profound. TV is here to stay, and the relevant question is "how" it will be used. TV must be "read" not viewed. Viewing takes a lower level of hearing and looking performance. No conscious individual effort is needed. Reading TV, however, requires a studied, calculated, integrated activity of high intellectual order. Television has become the only real and used reading-related form of communication of daily significance for wide segments of today's viewing public. Daily exposure to TV, rather than people, has made Big Bird children's grandmothers, and Coke jingles, their nursery rhymes. Brown gave two classroom ideas: Use of TV scripts (teachers would prepare students the same way they do for printed stories: build the background, introduce vocabulary, concepts, skills); Use of videotapes (the tapes could be stopped to be analyzed just as reading is analyzed after a paragraph).

Math

Hood, Susan, "TV Guide to Math", Instructor and Teacher, 91, January, 1982, pp. 50-53.

Hood stated that tuning children into math is as easy as ABC, CBS, and NBC. Eight TV-related games were designed to teach various math skills. The following games and skills are as listed in the article. However, many new games could be developed by simply making a game board and pasting TV stars' pictures on it. The Dukes of Hazzard (multiplication skills); Happy Days (estimation--no pencil or paper can be used); The Greatest American Hero (division skills--other skills could easily be substituted if necessary); Code Red (teach odd/even numbers); The Odd Couple (matching problems with matched sums and the characters that match); Three's Company (game board of various math problems revolving around 3); Shannon--or other detective show--(students have code sheets and must decode a secret message--like a cryptograph); Sesame Street (a game board with numbers and monster faces that children try to avoid by spinning numbers and moving that number of spaces.

Straub, Sylvia, "Metric Mastery Through TV", Teacher, 94, February, 1977, pp. 29-33.

Straub looked at two educational TV metric series. The first was "Measure Metric". After each program students measured many things in their environment under the teacher's supervision. Two advantages of teaching metrics with TV are that children have already accepted television as an important and educational aspect of their lives, and that school television programs are well-designed and offer controlled structure, sequence, and pacing of lessons. The second metric series was "The Metric System" and consisted of 15 to 20 minute color programs. The shows related metric measure to everyday situations. A Teacher's Guide is also included in the set. Students could also have a metric scavenger hunt to find objects of a certain metric length (the objects were measured prior to the hunt and placed on cards). Students also estimate object's possible lengths (height of a flag pole, length of a car).

Social Studies

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "TV Week: A Special Program of Events", Teacher, 96, January, 1979, pp. 36-43.

Potter used the following curriculum in her class to get over the "after-holiday letdown". She did the program in five days, however, more time may want to be devoted to certain areas. Day One: Come as a Commercial! (watch commercials and scrutinize purpose and technique, show the film "Seeing Through Commercials", discuss if all commercials are "bad"). Day Two: TV Career Day (invite sports or TV announcers, stage managers, or better yet, a TV star). Day Three: TV Station Field Trip (try to not only visit a studio but also be guests at TV shows). Day Four: TV Values Day (divide into groups and decide which shows are the best, reassemble the class and discuss the findings). Day Five: TV Skit Day (students work in groups of five to prepare skits dramatizing ideas learned during the week. Parodies of commercials and programs can be a very enjoyable way to cap off the television unit. The skits may also want to be videotaped for future analysis.

Snow, Danny O., "TV As A Learning Tool", PTA Today, April, 1981, p. 19.

Snow stated that watching an event on TV can be almost the same as "being there". With this in mind, it is not surprising that the ideas and attitudes of young people are influenced by what they view on TV. It is unusual, however, when ideas from TV result in positive action. From viewing the economic education show "Trade-offs", Theiss' class created an economic unit entitled "Mork's Out-of-This-World Pizza". The class surveyed demands of the market and elected a board of directors, sold stock, created a sales and marketing staff, and even made, baked, and sold the pizzas on the school grounds. The unit was profitable (\$223.00 profit) both economically and educationally. Concluding, Snow felt that television is a tool that educators cannot do without. When children learn to put concepts from classroom television programs into practice, they gain a fuller understanding of the subject matter.

Johnson, Jean, "And Now A Word From Our Sponsor...Let The Children Beware", Teacher, 94, April, 1977, pp. 83-86.

Johnson stated that fostering consumer skills among today's students can help them cope with current commercial practices, while concerned adults work to change them. The primary students should know that commercials are made solely to sell products. Commercials use several methods to sell their products: statistics (nine out of ten doctors recommend...); celebrity endorsements (Joe Namath selling products); product symbols (Tony the Tiger, Ronald McDonald); music (themes repeated several times during a commercial); bandwagon effect (everyone is switching to...); and disclaimers (batteries not included, artificially flavored). Classroom ideas: have the children count the number of advertised food products on television shows (45% of the products advertised were heavily sugared), and count the number of toy commercials in the fall, spring, and at Christmas time: create product ads for new products. Three excellent films are: "The Six Billion \$\$\$ Sell", "Seeing Through Commercials", and "Soopergoop".

Potter, Rosemary Lee, "TV People: Characters and Careers", Teacher, 95, February, 1978, pp. 44-52.

Potter presented classroom-tested activities for a career education unit. Topics included were: Insightful Characterization (select an admired TV character and discuss the character's role--good or bad, main or supporting cast); Character Match-Up (match characters and specific traits associated with them); Playing the Part (examine character and consider the portrayed part, act out roles); Who Speaks? (recognize how a character speaks); Costume Party (students dress up as their favorite TV personality and prizes are awarded for the best costume); Occupation Count (count the number of occupations seen on television--including commercials--and also analyze the jobs of these characters).

SUMMARY

Williams, Smart, and Epstein conducted a study that indicated television experiences could easily be incorporated into parent and child interactions. Of three groups tested (Parent-Child TV Interaction, Parent-Child Interaction--with no TV, and no Parent-Child Interaction--Control Group) the Parent-Child TV Group came out on top in the four tested areas: Utterance Frequency, TV Related Statements, Topic-Setting, and Extensions. The Extensions (elaborations) area was the strongest area and most dramatic in mean differences between the groups.

Gross asserted that the number of television sets in the home indicated the amount of parental control and guidance in television viewing. The more sets in the house, the less parents: watched television with children, controlled viewing, and discussed shows with their children. With a limited number of sets, however, child/parent watching increased.

Mohr reported that the peak period of child television viewing occurred between 6:30 and 8:00 p.m. (CST) with viewing percentages from 52% to 75.5%. Sizeable proportions (23% to 62%) continued to watch television between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. (CST)--past the family-viewing program time. "No parental guidance" was reported in 85.2% of the parents and 83.2% of the 5,167 children sampled. The low parental guidance figure indicates a need for parental education and an introduction to critical viewing skills.

Brown and Swick offered family alternatives to television viewing. They suggested that: television should be refrained from as a babysitting device--involve children in household jobs that bring them in the family arena; parents be selective of the shows being viewed--eliminate the negative and encourage the positive shows; parents should establish a family viewing and discussion time; and plan activities and alternatives to child television viewing--clubs, sports, scouting, lessons.

Wright and Laminack outlined a curriculum to make first graders critical listeners and readers. The curriculum utilized an analysis of television commercials with objectives including that commercials: are made to sell things, make a promise, don't always live up to their claims, and use music, words, pictures, and movement to sell their products. The activities accompanying the program developed an awareness and knowledge of the power of commercials to the first grade class.

Lee reported on the use of television scripts in the classroom. Of the 1138 teachers and students involved, reading skills and critical viewing of television were stimulated. Over eighty percent of the teachers and parents involved felt that this kind of reading program increased student enjoyment and interest in reading. Eighty-five percent of the parents mentioned parent/child relationship benefits--promoted closeness, provided a shared experience, encouraged viewing and discussion with their children, and offered a chance to share in their children's school work.

Potter wrote the column TV Talk in the magazine Teacher. Her references are listed because they present practical, teacher-tested TV ideas. The articles compiled her ideas, as well as, creative uses of TV from other educators in different parts of the country. The author of this paper felt that the national scope of her articles could include ideas that would not usually be exchanged by teachers within a given school corporation.

CONCLUSIONS

Many ideas and studies have been presented over the positive effects possible, through a critical viewing of television. The key to an improved television viewing program falls not only on the educational system but on the parents and families as well. Parents need to take time to discuss and enjoy television with their children. Teachers and the schools can inform parents and children how to use television wisely, but if no help or follow through is given at home, the critical television viewing program will be ineffective. Once children leave the classroom, the greatest amount of their time is spent on television watching so parents need to realize that it is not so much the quantity of television viewing but rather the quality of viewing that causes good or bad results.

More teachers, parents, and PTA organizations need to know about critical TV viewing. Such information could be spread by word-of-mouth or in writing to Teachers Guides to Television, Action for Children's Television, The National PTA TV Action Center, Prime Time School Television, The Parent Participation TV Workshop Project, and the National Educational Laboratory Publishers, Inc. (addresses listed in Appendix B).

Educators, go out and teach critical television viewing skills. This paper has not only given background information about such a viewing program but has also outlined teacher-tested programs. It is your job now to go out and start the Critical TV Viewing Revolution! Teachers shape the minds and attitudes of students and now is the time to influence children in making the best use of the medium: television. As Murrow said, "This instrument can teach, can illuminate--yes, it can even inspire--but it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise, it is merely lights and wires in a box."

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Teachers implement a critical television viewing program in their classrooms. Teachers must accept the fact that, since television plays a big part in most children's lives, they must capitalize on the medium as a teaching/learning tool.
2. Parents utilize the television set to promote critical thinking and viewing skills. This task can be accomplished by both viewing and discussing television with their children and using the Parent's Page of Helpful Hints.
3. Parents and teachers write letters to local and national television stations, elected officials, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Federal Trade Commission voicing concern over programs and commercials. The letters should include specific positive or negative aspects of the broadcast as well as suggested improvements.

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APPENDIX A

PARENT'S PAGE OF HELPFUL HINTS

The following hints were listed in a Boys Town Center produced, National PTA pamphlet, "Children and Television". Listed are four topics and hints to reduce negative TV influences.

Time

1. Keep a time chart with your child of his or her activities, including TV viewing, homework, and play with friends. Together, discuss what to eliminate and what to put in its place.
2. Set a weekly viewing limit. Have your child select programs from television schedules at the beginning of the week. You can assign points to programs and give the child a point total to spend weekly. Programs you do not want your child to watch can "cost" most in points.
3. Rule out TV at certain times such as before breakfast, or on school nights.
4. Make a list of alternative activities--riding a bicycle, reading a book, working on a hobby. Before watching TV, your child must choose and do something from the list.
5. Encourage the entire family to have program choices in mind before turning the TV set on and to turn it off when the show they plan to watch is over.
6. Remember that you set an example for your child. If you watch a lot of TV, chances are your child will also.
7. Be aware of the amount of time your children watch television. Monitor the programs your children watch (look specifically for occupations, types of transportation used, ratio of animal food to people food commercials, physical appearances of TV characters, types of products advertised, types of conflicts and whether they are resolved or not).

Violence

1. Watch at least one episode of the programs your child watches so you know how violent they are.
2. When you are viewing TV together, discuss the violence with your child. Talk about why the violence happened and how painful it is. Ask the child how conflict can be solved without violence.
3. Explain to your child how violence on an entertainment program is "faked."

4. Encourage your child to watch programs with characters that cooperate, help, and care for each other. These programs have been shown to influence children in a positive way.

Life on the Screen

1. Ask children to compare what they see on the screen with people, places, and events they know firsthand, have read about, or studied in school.
2. Encourage your child to read newspapers, listen to the radio, talk to adults about their work, or meet people from different ethnic or social backgrounds.
3. Tell your child what is real and what is make-believe on TV. Explain how television uses stunt people, camera zooms, dream sequences, and animation to create fantasy.
4. Explain the values you hold about sex, alcohol, and drugs to your child.

Advertising

1. Tell your child that the purpose of advertising is to sell products to as many viewers as possible.
2. Put advertising disclaimers into words children understand: "Partial assembly required" means "You have to put it together before you can play with it."
3. On shopping trips, let your child see the toys that look big, fast, and exciting on the screen, but that look disappointingly small and slow close up.
4. Teach your child a few facts about nutrition and then let him or her use them. For example, if the youngster can read package labels, allow your child to choose the breakfast cereal from those where sugar is not one of the first ingredients listed.

TELEVISION RELATED ADDRESSES

ABC-TV
Audience Information
1330 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10019

WSJV-TV
58096 County Road 7S
Elkhart, Indiana 46517

CBS-TV
Audience Services
51 West 52nd Street
New York, New York 10019

WSBT-TV
300 West Jefferson Boulevard
South Bend, Indiana 46601

NBC-TV
Audience Services
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10020

WNDU-TV
54516 Business 31 North
South Bend, Indiana 46637

Public Broadcasting Service
Viewer Mail
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

WNIT-TV
2424 California Road
Elkhart, Indiana 46514

Cable TV Information Center
1800 North Kent
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Indiana Cablevision Corporation
16830 Edison Road
Mishawaka, Indiana 46545

Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Federal Trade Commission
6th and Pennsylvania Avenues, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20580

Representative _____
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator _____
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The National PTA TV Action Center
700 North Rush Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Prime Time School Television
120 South LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Action for Children's Television
46 Austin Street
Newtonville, Massachusetts 02160

The Parent Participation TV Workshop
Project
699 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Teachers Guides to Television
699 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10021

National Educational Laboratory
Publishers, Inc.
P. O. Box 1003
Austin, Texas 78767